

Appl. No.: 10/053,240
Amdt. Dated: 03/17/2005
Off. Act. Dated: 10/19/2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and discussion presented herein.

1. Allowance of Claims.

The Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of Claims 58-75.

2. Allowability of Claims.

The Applicant also notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 6, 8-9, 25, 27, 28, 43, 45, 46, 80, 82, 83, 98, 100 and 101 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, the Applicant has amended the claims as follows:

Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claims 4 and 6, thereby rendering Claim 1 allowable. Claims 4 and 6 have been canceled. Claims 5, 13 and 18 have been amended to depend from Claim 1 as a result of cancellation of Claim 4. Claim 8 has been amended to depend from Claim 1 as a result of cancellation of Claim 6. Accordingly, Claims 1-3, 5, and 7-20 are allowable.

Claim 21 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 25, thereby rendering Claim 21 allowable. Claim 25 has been canceled. Claim 27 has been amended to depend from Claim 21 as a result of cancellation of Claim 25. Claims 22 and 23 have been amended to depend from Claim 21 since they incorrectly depended from Claim 1. Accordingly, Claims 21-24, and 26-39 are allowable.

Claim 40 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 43, thereby rendering Claim 40 allowable. Claim 43 has been cancelled. Claim 45 has been amended to depend from Claim 40 as a result of cancellation of Claim 43. Accordingly, Claims 40-42 and 44-57 are allowable.

Claim 76 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 80, thereby rendering Claim 76 allowable. Claim 80 has been canceled. Claim 82 has been amended to depend from Claim 76 as a result of cancellation of Claim 80. Accordingly, Claims 76-79, and 81-93 are allowable.

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Claim 94 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 98, thereby rendering Claim 94 allowable. Claim 98 has been canceled. Claim 100 has been amended to depend from Claim 94 as a result of cancellation of Claim 98. Accordingly, Claims 94-97, and 99-111 are allowable.

3. Rejection of Claims.

The Applicant notes that the rejection of Claims 1-5, 7, 10-24, 26, 29-42, 44, 47-57, 76-79, 81, 84-97, 99 and 102-111 is now moot in view of the amendments described above.

4. Amendments Made Without Prejudice or Estoppel.

Notwithstanding the amendments/cancellations made herein, the Applicant has taken this action in order expedite allowance of the currently pending subject matter. However, the Applicant does not acquiesce in the original ground for rejection with respect to the original form of the claims. These amendments/cancellations have been made without any prejudice, waiver, or estoppel, and without forfeiture or dedication to the public, with respect to the original subject matter of the claims as originally filed or in their form immediately preceding these amendments. The Applicant reserves the right to pursue the original scope of these claims in the future, such as through continuation practice for example.

5. Conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully requests that the various grounds for rejection in the Office Action be reconsidered and withdrawn with respect to the presently amended form of the claims, and that a Notice of Allowance be issued for the present application to pass to issuance.

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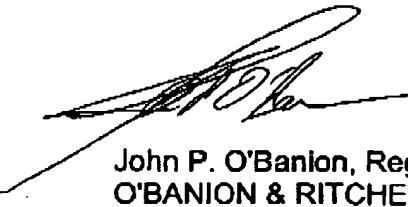
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In the event any further matters remain at issue with respect to the present application, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner please contact the undersigned below at the telephone number indicated in order to discuss such matter prior to the next action on the merits of this application.

Date: 3/17/05

Respectfully submitted,



John P. O'Banion, Reg. No. 33,201
O'BANION & RITCHIEY LLP
400 Capitol Mall, Suite 1550
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 498-1010